

not by the common brickmaker, but by the potter. The process of covering the surface of a common clay body by a skin of superior clay of closer texture, by a veneer of clay, as it were, or by smearing or washing, has been applied in chimney-pieces and water-pipes, and is evidently capable of a far more extensive application.

#### VENETIAN GOTHIC.

WHEN I penned the brief description with which I accompanied the illustration of the Palace dei Pergoli Intagliati, published in the *BUILDER* of the 15th instant, I little thought that such an accomplished critic as "Zeta" could so far misconstrue the little I said, as to require the more full explanation which I now offer. I intended to direct attention particularly to the balconies, which are decidedly beautiful, although a classic spirit pervades the composition. I did not for a moment expect that any one would institute a comparison between our Gothic and that of Venice, and I intended to lay particular stress on the words, "the Gothic Architecture peculiar to Venice." I again assert that such parts of the front as conspicuously belong to the same period form a beautiful specimen of *Venetian Gothic*. The lowermost story with its diminutive windows is of course modern: probably there existed here formerly an entrance door from the water, as in most of the Venetian houses, the necessity of which is done away with by that to the next palace being now made common to both. "Zeta" may then conclude that the whole of the front, with the exception of the part just alluded to, is coeval with the Ca d'Oro. The height of the balconies from the landing to the top of the rail is 3 feet 8 inches, and this may be taken as a scale for the whole front. I do not expect "Zeta" to agree with me in pronouncing this Palace to be beautiful, unless indeed he has been to Venice (?), for we must forget entirely our own Gothic, before we can contemplate with pleasure that of the sea-girt city. J. T. W.

#### TRANSATLANTIC ANTIQUITIES.

VAST regions of ancient ruins were discovered last year at the head of the Gulf of California. In describing them it was said at the time that "portions of temples, dwellings, lofty stone pyramids (seven of these within a mile square), and massive graniterings of circular walls, round venerable trees, columns and blocks of hieroglyphics—all speak of some ancient race of men now for ever gone, their history actually unknown to any of the existing families of mankind. In some points these ruins resemble the recently discovered cities of Palenque, &c., near the Atlantic or Mexican Gulf coast; in others, the ruins of ancient Egypt; in others, again, the monuments of Phœnicia; and yet in many features they differ from all that I have referred to. The discoverers deem them to be antediluvian, while the present Indians have a tradition of a great civilised nation, which their ferocious forefathers utterly destroyed. The region of the ruins is called by the Indians 'The Valley of Mystery.'"

In connection with this very curious and interesting subject, it occurs to us to draw special attention to the singular terms in which the following well-known passage in Plato's "Timæus" is indited. In place of taking the original, which we suspect might now admit of a little improvement in translation, we merely adopt the first English translation that happens to come in the way, preferring it, in the meantime, to any re-translation of our own, even with all the—it may be equivocal,—advantages this suggestion, as objection might be taken to a re-translation made under such circumstances. The passage occurs, as will be recollected, in the detail, by Critias, of his great grandfather's version of his kinsman Solon's intercourse with the priests of Egypt, to whose ancient "sacred records" or traditions the allusion is made by one of these priests in the outset, who narrates the tradition as one even then of extreme antiquity:—

"Our sacred records relate what a prodigious force your city once overcame, when a mighty warlike power, rushing from the Atlantic Sea,

spread itself with hostile fury over all Europe and Asia. That sea indeed was then navigable, and had an island fronting that mouth which you in your tongue call the Pillars of Hercules; and this island was larger than Libya and Asia put together; and there was a passage hence for travellers of that day to the rest of the islands, as well as from those islands to the whole opposite continent that surrounds that the real sea. For as respects what is within the mouth here mentioned, it appears to be a bay with a kind of narrow entrance; but that sea is indeed a true sea, and the land that entirely surrounds it may truly and most correctly be called a continent. In this Atlantic island, then, was formed a powerful league of kings, who subdued the entire island, together with many others, and parts also of the continent; besides which they subjected to their rule the inland parts of Libya, as far as Egypt, and Europe also, as far as Tyrrhenia. . . . Subsequently, however, . . . the Atlantic island itself was plunged beneath the sea, and entirely disappeared: whence even now that sea is neither navigable nor to be traced out."

The mud of the subsiding island, and the earthquakes and deluges made to account for the disappearance of this trans-atlantic land, may well be excused a place in so momentous a record; and had the loss of the power or skill of previous generations to navigate the "real sea,"—the Atlantic, and hence to cross from and to the disappeared land, been placed amongst the causes of its disappearance, instead of amongst its consequences, Plato, or Critias, or Solon's priest, would have been a little more logical, and nearer the truth, perhaps, over which the "mud" or dust of ages had cast its obscurity.

At all events, it would now really almost appear as if it were here recorded, in something else than mere ideal terms, however much obscured by error or tradition, that, at one time, our own hemisphere, or a very considerable portion of it, was overrun (just as America has been since the Atlantic has again become "navigable") by a great and enterprising people, who navigated the Atlantic ocean from "the great Atlantic island," or, in fact, from that transatlantic continent, or one or other of its island dependencies, of whose actual and wide spread civilization (and hence possible skill in navigation) in the most remote antiquity even of what we call the ancients of our own hemisphere, we are now attaining for the first time some important and unequivocal glimpses, in at least singular and heretofore unlooked for accordance with Plato's obscure tradition,—hitherto denounced as "a mere myth" full of improbabilities.

#### NEW RAILWAY TERMINUS AT GALWAY.

THE works at the Galway terminus of the Midland Great Western Railway have been commenced, and the new buildings, which consist of an extensive hotel in connection with the station offices, have been designed by the company's architect, Mr. Mulvany. The hotel will front Eyre-square, and the terminal offices are to be parallel with the departure platform. The booking-office (central on side elevation), 33 feet by 20 feet, is approached by a road with an incline of 1 foot in 14 feet. This apartment is situate at a level of 2 feet above the pathway at that point, is 18 feet in height, and entered by three doors, 4 feet 6 inches wide, and 11 feet 6 inches high. In the centre will be a metal dome, 10 feet 6 inches in diameter, supported on strong girders. A cornice and ornamented frieze course will surround the office. The exterior wall is 2 feet 8 inches thick; the landing, 5 feet 10 inches wide, ascended by three risers, and covered by a flat roof. On this platform are situated the various terminal offices, which are arranged as follows: to the left of the booking-office is a third-class waiting-room, 34 feet 9 inches by 26 feet, and lighted by three windows, 4 feet wide by 9 feet 4 inches high; a third-class females' waiting-room, 24 feet by 13 feet, with water-closet, 6 feet by 3 feet 6 inches; a first and second class private room, with three water-closets, urinals, &c., which is entered by a porch 11 feet 6 inches by 6 feet; a parcel office, 24 feet by 26 feet; mislaid luggage-room, 18 feet by 14 feet; third-class yard, with two water-closets, urinals, &c., and en-

tered by a porch 9 feet by 5 feet 6 inches. To the right of the booking-office is a second-class waiting-room, 26 feet by 21 feet; a first-class waiting-room, 24 feet by 16 feet; ladies' waiting-room, 24 feet by 14 feet 6 inches, with ante-room, 14 feet 6 inches by 6 feet, in which are two water-closets; superintendent's office, 24 feet by 10 feet 9 inches; refreshment saloon, 26 feet by 21 feet, lighted by two windows; porch, 10 feet 6 inches by 6 feet 9 inches, leading to coffee kitchen, 16 feet 6 inches by 9 feet 6 inches. The main wall, which will support the segmental corrugated iron roof, 40 feet span, constructing by Mr. Richard Turner, of Dublin, will be 3 feet 6 inches thick. The platform doors are intended to be 4 feet 6 inches wide by 10 feet high, of Riga oak, with plain architraves and dressings. Between the hotel and terminal offices is a house for the exclusive accommodation of the superintendent. The basement of the station offices contains various apartments. In the centre of elevation of station offices, is the entrance to booking-office, with three doors, having chiselled recesses, 13 inches wide, surrounding them, and central on the piers are brackets firmly secured to the wall, upon which an architrave, frieze, and cornice, 3 feet 7 inches deep, and blocking course, 1 foot 6 inches deep, and 14 inches in thickness, are constructed; a verandah being formed by their projection. The piers are 4 feet wide, composed of ashlar courses, of punched and drafted stone. At either side of this verandah is a wing 25 feet wide, with two windows, having chiselled recesses and pier similar in character to those before described, surmounted by a frieze course 1 foot 10 inches deep, a cornice with modillions, 1 foot 9 inches deep, and a parapet 4 feet 6 inches high, composed of pedestal, die, and capping. This portion projects 2 feet from the main wall. At each extremity of the station office building is a wing similar in all respects to those just described. The total length is 231 feet 6 inches. The parapet is broken at intervals by projecting piers. The frieze and cornice are continued the same from each extremity: Height to bottom of frieze, 15 feet; total height from ground line to parapet capping, 24 feet 7 inches; from floor of principal story to level of wall plate, 15 feet. The exterior of the building is composed of punched and drafted work, in ashlar courses, with the exception of the mouldings, cornices, plinth courses, recesses, round windows, &c., which are to be of chiselled stone. The offices will be enclosed by a roof composed of framed trusses, with girders, king post, principal rafters, common rafters, and strapped with Swedish iron. The elevation of principal story of superintendent's house will be of rock ashlar work.

The total dimensions of the hotel are 139 feet 10 inches in length, by 59 feet 7 inches in width. In the centre is a hall 23 feet square, which leads to an inner hall 23 feet by 11 feet, communicating with the principal staircase, 23 feet 3 inches by 21 feet, and a corridor at either side, 32 feet 8 inches long by 14 feet, off which the various apartments of the hotel are situated.

The principal elevation of the hotel consists of a centre portion, 30 feet 10 inches wide, and projecting about 2 feet beyond the main wall. In this the main entrance from the street to the building is formed, which consists of four punched and drafted piers, with French rustics, and having ante: of chiselled stone at either side. In the centre of this portico is a door 4 feet 6 inches wide by 10 feet 6 inches high, leading to the hall; and in the inter-columns are two windows, 3 feet wide by 7 feet high, with architraves round same. The portico will be surmounted by an entablature. At each extremity of this elevation are wings 25 feet wide, of the same character as the centre projection, except that the principal story piers are wider and have no ante attached.

Mr. Dargan, the contractor for the extension line to Galway, is executing the works, and has undertaken to have the line open and the buildings completed against the 1st of August next. The probable cost will be 18,000*l*.